

Al Qaeda After the Death of Bin Laden – The Future of Jihadist Terrorism
(Thomas Joscelyn, May 25, 2011)

Transcript available below

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The death of Osama bin Laden will significantly affect both sides in the war on terror. The most important questions now are how will al Qaeda and its associated movements respond to the death of their leader, and is the United States safer or in more danger today? The Westminster Institute brings together world-renowned authorities and national security practitioners for a one-day special event in Washington, D.C. Together they will provide answers to these questions and also address the broader questions of what impact bin Laden's death will have on non-violent jihadists such as the Muslim Brotherhood, and what strategies can the U.S. employ to turn this battlefield win into a definitive victory.

About the speaker

Thomas Joscelyn is a senior fellow at the [Foundation for Defense of Democracies](#) and is senior editor of FDD's [Long War Journal](#), a widely read publication dealing with counterterrorism and related issues. Much of his research focuses on how al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (or ISIS, ISIL) operate around the globe.

Joscelyn has served as a trainer for the FBI's Counterterrorism Division. Thomas has testified before Congress on fourteen occasions, including before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, House Homeland Security Committee, House Foreign Affairs Committee, House Armed Services Committee, and House Judiciary Committee. He was the senior counterterrorism adviser to Mayor Giuliani during the 2008 presidential campaign.

Joscelyn has constructed dossiers for hundreds of terrorists during the course of his work. *The Daily Beast* has described him as one of "the most trusted authorities on the al-Qaeda network because of his encyclopedic knowledge of terrorist biographies." In 2007, he published a monograph titled, "Iran's Proxy War Against America," which details Iran's decades-long sponsorship of America's terrorist enemies. In 2008, he completed an exhaustive review of the Guantanamo Bay detainee population, cataloging and analyzing thousands of pages of declassified documents.

Joscelyn is also a frequent contributor to *The Weekly Standard*. His work has been published by a variety of other publications and cited by *The Associated Press*, *Reuters*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *Time*, *Foreign Policy*, and many others. He makes regular appearances on television and radio programs.

Transcript

Thomas Joscelyn:

I am supposed to talk a little bit about the death of bin Laden and sort of the future of jihad and Al Qaeda and where things are going, and that may seem like a sort of obvious topic to address, you know, given recent events here, but I think of that night after Osama bin Laden was killed, after the news broke that he had been killed in Abbottabad, Pakistan.

I turned on CNN and I saw one of the guys who was considered one of the leading thinkers on Al Qaeda, a guy named Peter Bergen, who is CNN's counterterrorism analyst. He said that the war was over, that is it, terrorism is over, we do not have anything to worry about anymore. That is it and, in fact, it is just that the Americans need to get beyond the War on Terror. As if it is something that we came up with, as if it is a construct in our heads and not something that we are actually fighting, you know.

So, I guess I would start by saying the war is, in fact, not over for a lot of reasons. I think that the ideological conflict has been greatly outlined by the previous presenters here today and so I am not going to touch so much on that, but so what I am going to talk about is much more about the nitty gritty of the fight and that starts with jihadist-sponsoring states.

Now, that may even seem like an obvious notation for everybody. I mean, you know, of course there are states that are involved in sponsoring terrorism and are involved in terrorism but in fact, much of the analysis that has proceeded here in the U.S. and in the West starts with the assumption that states are not in fact involved in sponsoring terrorism whether that be Al Qaeda or its like-minded affiliates around the globe.

And since we have a Cold War-minded crowd here today, I will start with a brief analogy. Back in the Cold War, back in 1981 in fact, the Reagan Administration decided it was going to confront Marxist and Leftist terrorism and Secretary of State Alexander Haig came forward and said that in fact, much of the terrorism that was on the planet, Marxist and Leftist terrorism, was sponsored by the Soviet Union. And so, the Reagan Administration ordered up a National Intelligence Estimate on Soviet-sponsored terrorism and they kicked it over to the CIA's analysts and the CIA's Soviet analysts came back and said, well, no, in fact, the Soviets are not sponsoring terrorism. It is against their interests to do so and they would never do this. They would never be involved in sponsoring terrorism.

Well, the fight that ensued, a bureaucratic fight that ensued, was quite legendary. In fact, Bob Gates, the current Secretary of Defense, talks about this in his book *From the Shadows* and I recommend anybody go out there and read it because it is a pretty interesting characterization, I would say, from Bob Gates, who is ever the bureaucrat and sides with the bureaucrats to a certain extent.

I think he still gets the facts right of what happened and lo and behold, what happened was the Soviet analysts were wrong and Bill Casey and the CIA leadership and President Reagan were right. In fact, the Soviets were deeply involved in sponsoring terrorism. In fact, not only were the Soviets and their client states deeply involved in sponsoring terrorism generally and broadly in terms of training and so forth and ideologically, they actually were arming and training terrorist groups in Europe, in the Middle East, and elsewhere to attack us. In fact, in Lebanon a Soviet-backed terrorist group was actually tasked by the KGB to go out and kidnap the deputy head of the CIA in Lebanon in the 1970s.

So I just want you to pause for a second here and think about this. At the same time the Soviets are actually sponsoring terrorism against the CIA directly, the CIA's Soviet analysts are saying that the Soviets are not sponsoring terrorism at all, okay?

That is the type of ideological, I would say, intellectual blind-spot you are dealing with when it comes to the analysis of terrorism. Now, you may be wondering, what does that have to do with today? What does that have to do with Al Qaeda and Islamist terrorism? Well, it turns out that in the 1990s our analysts, as brilliant as they are, made the same assumption again. They decided that Islamist terrorism, jihad, was not state sponsored. And in fact, if you go to the 9/11 Commission Report, you will see in

the 9/11 Commission it specifically describes Al Qaeda as “stateless” and as a “new terrorism without any state backers.”

Now, if you go through the 9/11 Commission Report carefully, as I have many, many times since 2004 when it came out, you will realize this is logically incoherent. When you actually look at the facts of what is reported in the 9/11 Commission Report.

Now, I will start with a very simple, basic overview of just safe haven for Al Qaeda. It starts in the early 1990s when bin Laden and Al Qaeda needed a place to live and they turned to Sudan, which at the time was run by a guy named Hasan al-Turabi, a leading member of the international Muslim Brotherhood.

And al-Turabi was a radical ideologue, a real dangerous thinker, if you actually get into how he thinks and how he viewed the world, it is really, really troubling. And al-Turabi did not see the world as, you know, divided between the Muslim world even, divided between Sunnis and Shiites. He saw the world as divided between Muslims and non-Muslims and so what he did with the Sudan is he turned it basically into this place for cross fertilization of all of these different terrorist groups and ideologues that come together and terrorist groups that come together, including Al Qaeda, and bin Laden.

You know, Osama bin Laden forged a lot of lasting relationships there in Sudan. So, his safe haven in Sudan as documented by the 9/11 Commission was a crucially important part in Al Qaeda’s development. Well, wait a minute, that is one state, right? So we have got one state where now we have one state that actually plays a role in sponsoring Al Qaeda.

Well, in the mid-1990s Al Qaeda’s safe haven in Sudan became troubled, I would say, under immense international pressure. And so, Sudan politely asked bin Laden to leave, basically, with Al Qaeda and what they did was they relocated to South Asia.

Now, going to the 9/11 Commission Report, what we find is the Pakistani military and intelligence establishment had long had a relationship with bin Laden and Al Qaeda going back to the 1980s when sort of proto-Al Qaeda was first getting going. The military-intelligence establishment in Pakistan likely knew he was coming – the 9/11 Commission found – and actually took steps to introduce him to the Taliban in Afghanistan to make sure he would have a safe haven in Afghanistan. Well, that is two states now that are playing a role in sponsoring Al Qaeda because now you had the Pakistani military-intelligence establishment, making sure that Al Qaeda’s leadership can relocate to Afghanistan.

Now, of course, they get to Afghanistan and what happens is that Al Qaeda forges this lasting relationship with the Taliban. There is a lot of nonsense out there about the Taliban can be split from Al Qaeda. I will not get into that today because that is a whole other session, but that is just not true. But here you have a third state, right? You have the Taliban in Afghanistan now, which is sponsoring or working with Al Qaeda.

So what does the paradigm stateless mean? Well, to me it is meaningless. It does not mean anything. It basically is trying to skirt around the fact that you have a number of bad actors that are really involved in sponsoring, harboring, training, at a variety of levels of assistance and support for Al Qaeda and its affiliates.

As you go through that what you realize when you start to accept the fact that states are involved in this fight, you start to see things a little differently. And I will give you a great example. If you look at the

fight in Afghanistan right now, our military leaders and I would say our political leadership goes to great lengths to deny the fact that Pakistan and Iran are essentially waging proxy wars against American troops in Afghanistan. They occasionally will admit that yes, Iran is doing bad things and Pakistan is doing bad things, but they do not really want to get into the real war that is unfolding.

There is a lot that could be said about this, but one of the interesting sources that has come forward to really confirm the role of Pakistan and Iran are playing in Afghanistan, waging war against our troops are all of these leaked documents from WikiLeaks, including the Guantanamo Threat Assessments, State Department cables, and ISAF threat reports. Those are the three categories of documents that have been released by WikiLeaks.

Now, I guarantee you when Julian Assange set forth to leak these documents, that he did not think he was going to be talking about state-sponsored terrorism or he was going to be documenting what America's enemies are up to, but that is, in fact, what he has done. And if you go through these documents in great detail, you find a lot of troubling revelations.

You find, for example, as I did that back in 2002 that the Pakistani ISI, the same group that introduced the Taliban to bin Laden back in the mid-1990s has actually been working very heavily with all of the different insurgency groups in Afghanistan, trying to bring them together and coordinate their attacks against Americans and even civilians.

In one case (this is really troubling from my perspective), they actually trained the Taliban to go after civilian workers in Afghanistan, including Red Cross workers. And the Pakistani military officers trained the Taliban to go into Afghanistan, kidnap and murder Red Cross workers, which they did. And in fact, they were relaying instructions for once this poor victim was kidnapped, the Taliban actually got on their phones and relayed to get instructions from in Pakistan for what to do with them. The order came from the Pakistani-supported Taliban leaders in Pakistan to kill him. Well, that is state sponsorship, is it not? I mean that is a state directly sponsoring jihadist terrorism.

And it gets worse than that. I think if you go across the board, you can actually see that Pakistan has basically become the home for all three of the chief insurgency groups that we are fighting in Afghanistan today. You have Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's group, which is known as the HeI. You have Mullah Omar's Taliban, which, by the way, is located in Quetta. In fact, his group is called the Quetta Shura Taliban. Okay, hello, it is named after a Pakistani city. We all know where he is operating. The Pakistanis know where he is operating. They are protecting him.

The Haqqani network, which is the third main insurgency group, long-time clients of the Pakistani military intelligence establishment. In fact, the head of the Pakistani military has repeatedly tried to negotiate a power-sharing agreement for Siraj Haqqani, the head of the Haqqani Network in Afghanistan. That is how much they are under the patronage of the Pakistanis.

It is indisputable that these three groups are all originally Pakistani proxies. It is indisputable that they all receive support from Pakistan to this day. In fact, I could list hundreds of examples of how that is true. But there is something else that you should know about all three of them, which is that they are all deeply allied with Al Qaeda.

Al Qaeda is not just this group that is stateless as the 9/11 Commission found, but actually has both direct state-backers but also indirect state backing through the groups it has allied itself with, which are in turn state-backed. And so I come back to what Peter Bergen said about 'the War on Terror is over'

and you are going to see a lot of people thinking along those lines, but I come back to where Osama bin Laden was killed, which is basically right near Pakistan's version of West Point in Abbottabad, Pakistan.

Now, if you think that nobody in the Pakistan military intelligence establishment knew that he was there, I would say I could take you up to New York and there is a bridge I would like to sell you, you know, because it is just not true. I mean, obviously, you know, in fact, the Obama administration went to great lengths to keep the operation from the Pakistani military intelligence establishment because it was so worried about this information leaking and the raid being stopped [before it could begin].

It turns out, again turning back to 9/11 Commission, that is not new. In fact, when the Clinton administration tried to kill Bin Laden back in 1998, they decided against it. Why? Because they would have to tell the Pakistanis that they were coming, and they knew the Pakistanis would tip him off, right? Well, is that not state sponsorship, you know? So, where are we when we talk about stateless, I have no idea at this point. I mean I look at what has been said about Al Qaeda and its affiliates being stateless, and just the basic facts of how it operates, where it receives safe haven undermine that whole mantra.

But I would like to turn now to Iran a little bit, and this is a topic which I was actually at AIPAC on Monday, discussing, and I was supposed to have a debate, but my debate partner dropped out, unfortunately, that would have been fun. But Iran has been one of the more misunderstood parties in all this, and the big misunderstanding from Iran's perspective, from the perspective of people who study Iran is that somehow because it is Shiite that it cannot possibly work with Sunnis, okay, and that the Iranians could not possibly work with Sunnis because of these ideological and theological differences preclude them from working together.

Well, [there are] a lot of things I can say about that, but I will start with the 9/11 Commission Report. okay? And I would encourage you to go home and if you have a copy of the 9/11 Commission Report, then you can, if you want to, take down these page number so you can check me, okay? It is pages 61, 68, 128, 240, and 241, and after reading those pages I want to ask you a question, Does Iran sponsor Al-Qaeda or not? Because I think the answer is unequivocally, yes, it does, and it does in very important and very troubling ways. But so how could that be right? I mean you know Iran is Shiite, and Al-Qaeda is Sunni, and they have all these supposed differences. Well, the bottom line is that a lot of times tactical necessity trumps those ideological or theological concerns.

And you know, I think it was Steve in here earlier had a picture of Sayyid Qutb throughout his presentation a number of times. And Sayyid Qutb is in fact the big Muslim Brotherhood ideologue who influenced and really was the forefather of Al-Qaeda, really got Al Qaeda's thinking, put a place for it in the world. Well, Ayatollah Khomeini, who leads the current Iranian revolution – actually, this is Khamenei now, not Khomeini. Khamenei, who is the current spiritual leader of Iran, actually translated Qutb's words from the Arabic into Persian, okay? He sat down and did it, multiple volumes of it, so here is the intellectual forefather of al-Qaeda, and the current head of Iran actually took the time to translate his words into Persian from the Arabic in order to spread his word throughout Iran. In fact, it is still some of the most widely read volumes in the clerical establishment in Iran today.

So, this idea that Sunnis and Shiites cannot cooperate really is, I would say, a pseudo intellectual understanding of the world. It is sort of this veneer people like to pretend they actually understand the Middle East when that is really just not an understanding at all, and you know, again, even if you look

at Israel and Israel's enemies today, Hamas has the same ideological roots as Al Qaeda does. Well, it is radical Sunni. Who is its chief state backer? Iran.

Okay, now why is it so important?

Well, if you go and you check those pages from the 9/11 Commission Report, you will find some troubling things, and one of things you will find is that in the 1990s when bin Laden was in the Sudan, he was really struggling to get Al Qaeda going. He wanted to show how Al Qaeda could be, you know, some of this international vanguard for jihadists around the globe. He wanted to really inspire them to action, and so they needed a spectacular event. They needed something that would show, you know, just how powerful Al Qaeda had become.

And Bin Laden got the idea, this is going back to the early 1990s now, that in fact he should reach out to Iran and its chief terrorist proxy Hezbollah, for training. And he said, 'You know, one of the things that Iran did back in the early 1980s, in 1983 in Lebanon, was basically forced the American withdrawal from Lebanon with an attack on the Marine barracks there. It killed 241 Marines. And Bin Laden looked at that and said, ah, well, America is a paper tiger, they will retreat if we hit them, and the way I can show people that we can do this is if we learn how to do this and Al Qaeda does this to the Americans again.'

So, he reaches out to Iran and Hezbollah, and he says show me how to do this, show my organization how to do this. Now, this, again, is all according the 9/11 Commission Report on the pages I cited for you, okay? Iran and Hezbollah agreed, okay, and they took the military committee members of Al-Qaeda, they took a number of different tactical experts from Al-Qaeda into Lebanon and Iran, and showed them how to do it. They showed them how to attack embassies, how to build suicide truck bombs, how to do that type of thing.

Well, the result was the 1998 embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, okay? As you go through that operation [you find that] that was a mirror image of what Hezbollah and Iran did in the early 1980s in Lebanon. They attacked diplomatic facilities with suicide truck bombs, there were simultaneous attacks that they were coordinating even though there were hundreds of miles away, the way the truck bombs were designed, the whole nine yards.

So, you go forward to 1998, and after the embassies are bombed, the Clinton administration sits down and says, well, now we have to really get tough with Al-Qaeda, and we are going to issue an indictment, so that is basically what they did, they issued an indictment. And you look at the indictment of Al-Qaeda, and interestingly enough, in the indictment of Al-Qaeda they recognize state sponsorship. They say that Al Qaeda has forged these relationships with the Sudan, that is where they were headquartered in the early 1990s, but also with Iran and Hezbollah to act against their common enemies.

And then you flashforward to October of 2000 when a key Osama bin Laden lieutenant decides to agree to a plea deal in a US Court, actually, in the Southern District of Manhattan. His name is Zawi Muhammad. In his plea deal he agreed. He says, yes, I was the one was personally responsible for setting up the meetings between Hezbollah and Iran on the one hand, and Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden on the other. He agrees to this.

And then, in early 2001, there is a trial, and at that trial several witnesses come forward that are all relied upon by the Clinton administration and prosecutors, and they all say, up and down, that Iran and

Hezbollah trained Al-Qaeda to do this. And that is how Al Qaeda acquired what the 9/11 Commission later deemed the quote-unquote, “tactical expertise” to do the embassy bombings.

Now, think about it for a second. This is Al Qaeda’s most spectacular attack prior to 9/11. This is the thing that brings them into the fore. Most people had not even heard of Al-Qaeda before the August 1998 Embassy Bombings. The whole point of them was that you would hear about them so you know who they were, that they could kill on a mass scale, and yet the 9/11 Commission, Clinton administration prosecutors, you know, court documents, the terrorists themselves, a number of different parties would come forward and tell you that Iran and Hezbollah actually showed Al Qaeda how to do this.

Well, how can the 9/11 Commission in the same document that says that Al Qaeda is stateless include this information on the pages I gave you? It just does not make any sense, right? It is just logically incoherent. Well, now, the last two page numbers I came to are 240, 241 I gave you. I suggest you read those very carefully. I have many times because it is actually very interesting. You will see that these are two pages that were basically written to track the movements of the hijackers for 9/11, and they are tracking their travels, and you will see seven instances in those two pages where senior Hezbollah operatives and officials are cited, seven on two pages, okay?

And this information actually did not come to the 9/11 Commission until one week before the final report was due, and what happens is the commissioners and all their staffers come forward and they say, wow, you know, this is really troubling, look at this, you know. They found a box of evidence from the NSA, including intercepts and other information that showed that Hezbollah officials were tied to all the hijackers.

And the staffers, to their credit, said we have to put something in the commission’s report for this, and they said we have to have to do this really quick because, you know, we cannot go to press and publish this report and not explicitly raise the troubling questions about Iran and Hezbollah’s role in all this. And so, they did, so 240 and 241 are the pages where they put it in. And you will see at the end of page 241 when they get to the end of the section that it says we believe the U.S. government should investigate this further. That is what it says.

Well, I am here to tell you that investigation never happened, okay?

So, years ago people made this assumption that Al Qaeda was stateless, okay? There is ample evidence that it is not stateless, that in fact, state backers work with it and use it for [their] own purposes, right? And yet, there is no will to actually investigate the state backers of Al Qaeda even after the 9/11 Commission, the official body that is commissioned to look at this, [the] greatest attack, comes forward and says we should look it, they still do not do it.

Well, last week there was a lawsuit in New York. The Commission staffer’s name is Janice Kephart, who actually investigated the hijackers’ travels, that is what she was tasked with. She filed an affidavit and she said you should have been looking at this all along, and she put in an affidavit and a lawsuit against Iran, saying that, in fact, Iran at least provided material support by providing safe haven and safe transit to the hijackers. Okay, that is the minimum of what we know. Now, on that lawsuit I think there is some good information and some bad information, but I think her affidavit stands out as something really important.

Well, now, wait a minute, you know, I keep harping on this, but just think about this for a second, you know. I will tell you right now, I have a lot of conversations with people at DNI, DHS, CIA, DIA, three-letter acronyms, any one you can pick, basically, I talk to people there, okay, and they have this whole idea that Al Qaeda is stateless and does not get any state support, and you hear voluminous amounts of information that says otherwise. Well, I want return to Afghanistan a little bit because here is another great example of where state sponsorship matters.

Prior to 9/11, Taliban and Iran were at each other's throats. There is no doubt about that. In fact, in 1998, 1999 they were on the verge of war, and that is because the Taliban executed a number of Shiite diplomats in Mazar-e Sharif, which is in the northern part of Afghanistan, and also had a brutal assault on hundreds of other Shiites there. And the Iranians moved a bunch of troops to the border, and Mullah Omar had a bunch of anti-Iranian rhetoric, and the Iranians went back at Mullah Omar, and just you know about verbal fighting, rhetorical fighting. And they were on the verge of real fighting. Well, after 9/11, something interesting happened, which is the Iranians said they do not dislike the Taliban that much anymore because we are there, we are in Afghanistan.

And so, there is a guy down in Guantanamo. One of the things I study intently are the Guantanamo detainees and sort of the profiles of who they are. This guy still down there named Khairullah Khaikhah. He was the governor of the Herat province for the Taliban, which is the westernmost province, bordering on Iran. And he has admitted that what he did after 9/11 was he setup the meetings between the Taliban and Iran so that Iran could give support to the Taliban in their war against the U.S., and Iran pledged its assistance to the Taliban in its war against the U.S.

What does that tell you about state sponsorship or state backing, you know? It tells you that Iran is willing to work with anybody against us because after all we are the Big Satan and the Little Satan is Israel. This is what I always tell people, you know. And Iran is basically willing to work with anybody along those lines. And so what you find in the documents down at Guantanamo and all these other leaked documents that I talked about, the ISF threat reports, and the ISF State Department cables, all these leaked documents is that, in fact, Iran has sponsored the Taliban all the years since then from late 2001 through and current.

Now, of course, the Pakistani ISI does as well in Afghanistan, but here is the Taliban, which is our prime enemy in Afghanistan in terms of what is launching attacks against the civilian population, against American forces, and it has got two very powerful state backers. So, you know, here is the bottom line: if you are an American soldier or American commander or a General on the ground in Afghanistan, who is it you are fighting, you know? Are you fighting these stateless actors who are just coming your way or waging jihad against you or are you fighting proxies of states who are killing American soldiers? I will tell you that the evidence is just overwhelming that, in fact, these are proxies of states, they work with states.

Now, that does not mean necessarily that Al Qaeda or its affiliates were wholly owned by states, that is not the truth, okay, and it is not that they were totally under direct control of states, that is not the truth either, but states have worked with them to amplify their capabilities and have worked with them to achieve common objectives. That is the truth of the matter and there are a lot of different states along those lines.

I will give you another quick example outside of South Asia. If you go to Yemen, [there is] Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). We all know Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula is now, according to the Obama administration, the greatest threat to us in terms of terrorism, okay, in terms of Al Qaeda

affiliates and Al Qaeda itself because it is the one that is actually taking the lead in launching attacks against us.

Well, again, here is a piece of information that comes out from all the leaked documents. The number two player in Yemen is a guy named General Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar. He is a guy who brought President Saleh to power in 1978, part of a tripartite agreement between, basically, Saleh's backers, the Islamists, and the military. Now, Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar is, in fact, according to State Department cables and according to leaked intelligence documents, a longtime supporter of jihadism and terrorism, and, in fact, he is a longtime supporter of Osama bin Laden.

This is the number two guy in the military or number one guy in the military, but number two guy in all of Yemen, who is a prime Al Qaeda backer. If you think about that for a second, here is another state that, in fact – or elements there of that are sponsoring Al Qaeda, and, in fact, General Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar actually founded or helped found the original Al Qaeda affiliate in Yemen, which was called the Islamic Army of Aden, which grew into Al Qaeda's formal affiliate and helped launch the USS Cole bombing among other things.

Oh, well, the USS Cole Bombing, the guy who executed that is down at Guantanamo. Leaked documents on him show that, in fact, he had a great relationship with the Yemeni political security organization in the government of Yemen, and worked closely with them, a guy named Nashiri, and he had state backers there to help him do that.

Wait a minute now, now, we have tied another government, another jihadist-sponsoring state to Al-Qaeda and an Al Qaeda attack, so what is the common theme of all this? If you had not guessed, it is that the stateless paradigm does not make any sense and that we really needed a different way of viewing these things and a different way of talking about them, in order to try to understand the enemy we fight. And that the war, as Peter Bergen said, is not over, it is just beginning, I would say, in some ways because these states have been basically held unaccountable for all this stuff for all these years.

And so, all of the ideological problems that were talked about earlier today I think are all hold, and I think it was brilliantly outlined for you by the other presenters. I would say the other half of that are the jihadist states actually sponsored that ideology in various ways, and they use it for their own gain. They manipulate those who adhere to it, and they, basically, as far as our own government is concerned, are not even in that game. Thanks.